

RESOLUTION NUMBER 205
ADVISORY RESOLUTION TO THE BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND APPORTIONMENT
REGARDING THE CLOSING OF THE WORKHOUSE AND THE REAPPORTIONMENT OF
FUNDS

WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis operates two incarceration centers, the St. Louis City Justice Center (CJC) located at 200 S. Tucker with a capacity of 860 detainees, and the Medium Security Institution (MSI) located at 7600 Hall Street commonly referred to as “The Workhouse,” which has a capacity of 1138, for a combined capacity of 1998 detainees; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis currently spends approximately \$16M a year to operate MSI and \$24M a year to operate CJC for a combined cost of \$40M; and

WHEREAS, in recent years a heightened focus on the policies governing the granting of bail has led to a more just and reasonable set of bail standards, which has led to a dramatic reduction in the number of detainees housed in both the institutions, so that the recent number of detainees at both facilities totals less than 900; and

WHEREAS, as of January 1, 2020 the Missouri Supreme Court’s guidance policies on bail and detention standards became permanent and such levels of incarceration are very likely to remain constant; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis is under contract with the Federal government to house federal detainees and during 2019, the average number of federal detainees was 230 and reimbursement to the City of St. Louis of \$80 per day per detainee for a total reimbursement of approximately \$5M; and

WHEREAS, the number of detainees at the MSI is currently approximately 250, approximately 20% of its capacity, at a cost of approximately \$175 per person per day; and

WHEREAS, the elimination of the federal contract will result in 230 fewer detainees and free up capacity to move over the current 250 detainees at MSI and it is clear that the cost of this contract does not justify keeping the Workhouse open; and

WHEREAS, the elimination of the federal contract will free up enough space to reasonably move current detainees from MSI to CJC and therefore there is no reason to believe that the closing of MSI will include risk of freeing individuals deemed a danger to society; and

WHEREAS, it is clear that this reduction in the number of detainees is such that the Workhouse can now be closed resulting in an annual financial savings of approximately \$11,000,000 per year; and

WHEREAS, there remain substantial needs for services in the areas of victims’ services, mental health, workforce training and other areas of public safety and human development to which services the resulting approximate \$11,000,000 could be productively dedicated.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this honorable Board of Aldermen does hereby advise the Board of Estimate and Apportionment that this Board shall not approve a budget for Fiscal Year 2020/2021 that includes funding to continue to fully operate the Medium Security Institution (MSI) commonly known as “The Workhouse” and requests of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment that it include in the Fiscal Year 2020/2021 budget a plan to close MSI and direct the savings of achieved through this closing of MSI to other areas of need within the community regarding public safety and human development activities.

Introduced on the 17th day of January, 2020 by:
The Honorable Dan Guenther, 9th Ward Alderman
The Honorable Jesse Todd, 18th Ward Alderman

The Honorable Cara Spencer, 20th ward Alderwoman
The Honorable Brandon Bosley, 3rd Ward Alderman
The Honorable Annie Rice, 8th Ward Alderwoman
The Honorable Heather Navarro, 28th Ward Alderwoman
The Honorable Megan Green, 15th ward Alderwoman
The Honorable Christine Ingrassia, 6th Ward Alderwoman
The Honorable Sarah Martin, 11th Ward Alderwoman

Adopted this 17th day of January 2020, as attested by:

Terry Kennedy
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis E. Reed
President, Board of Aldermen